

J. G. Ballard, who reached 65 at the end of last year, is the subject of our third "author issue" – the first two having been devoted to Brian Aldiss (issue 38, August 1990) and to Bob Shaw (issue 67, January 1993). Apart from his recent birthday, another occasion for the present issue was the appearance of Jim Ballard's first-ever non-fiction book, *A User's Guide to the Millennium* (HarperCollins, January 1996). That volume collects 33 years' worth of miscellaneous pieces on a host of subjects: literary, filmic, artistic and scientific. It struck us that all commentary on JGB's own influential body of fiction had been omitted (modestly) from the book, so we conceived the plan of bringing together a number of other non-fiction pieces by Ballard in which he does write about



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his own fiction. This was our idea, not the author's! But he kindly gave his permission, and produced a new short story, "The Dying Fall," which is his first to be written for any magazine in several years.

As we said in last issue's trailer, Jim Ballard has a big year ahead, with the David Cronenberg film of

Crash probably due for release in the summer or autumn, and a new novel, *Cocaine Nights*, coming from HarperCollins in September. For a few more words on both those subjects, see this issue's interview. We're pleased to celebrate JGB's significant achievements in advance of the publicity which will no doubt accompany the Cronenberg film (as it did the Spielberg film of Ballard's *Empire of the Sun* in 1987). Ballard is a writer whose reputation extends far beyond the science-fiction field; and yet, in our view, he remains rooted in sf – and he has been a strong supporter of this magazine from its inception in 1982. Special thanks to critics Roger Luckhurst and Takayuki Tatsumi, and to artist SMS, for rising to the occasion.

David Pringle

Dear Editors:

I was pleased to read Deirdre Counihan's letter in *IZ* 103; she managed to articulate something which I have felt for some years now. While sf is often quite daring in its use of experimental literary techniques it lags far behind in the field of visual imagery. A quick skim through my bookcase provides salient examples: J. G. Ballard's back catalogue is full of dreamscapes worthy of De Chirico or Max Ernst, but comes wrapped in hideous air-brushed still-life illustrations, evocative only of supermarket advertising or 1970s Athena prints in the waiting rooms of suburban dentists. Iain M. Banks gets pseudo-realistic spaceships and planets, like rejected production paintings from *Star Trek*, and Colin Greenland, whose *Seasons of Plenty* deserved the attentions of a modern Piranesi, or at least a Mervyn Peake, ends up with a lifeless space-floozie who appears to have been vacuum-moulded from a substance resembling Caramac.

These three approaches seem to be the only ones allowed to grace the covers of science-fiction novels. I have no objection to realism *per se*, although it seems a perverse approach to the worlds of the imagination, but for the most part it's not even technically competent. Ms Counihan blames this lack of basic skills on elitist art colleges refusing to take students who want to work in the field. Surely the truth is that when these students arrive, their portfolios bulging with spaceships and nymphets, any competent art tutor will attempt to divert their talent away from this visual cul-de-sac and onto a more challenging route?

There are many different ways of seeing and it is a pity that sf, the most eclectic of literatures, has lumbered itself with only one; like having your house designed by Richard Rogers and buying the furnishings at Laura Ash-

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ley. I realize, too, that books with these covers sell and that publishers may be wary of more experimental approaches.

But what about *Interzone*? Would you be prepared to drop your Monthly Cover Spaceship in favour of, for instance, one of Dave McKean's hallucinatory collages? The interior illustrations have picked up a bit in recent months, but they still tend to be rather literal, and seem to be used only as fillers or decoration. There must be hundreds of young illustrators who would be glad to provide a bit of variety to your pages. Your readers seem happy for you to take literary risks perhaps you could begin to do the same with visuals?

Philip Reeve
Brighton

Dear Editors:

Patrick Parrinder's article on the copyright mess (*IZ* 104) was interesting, although I'm not sure that he is right to blame it on the Beatles; as I understand it the genesis of the change to a 70-year period of copyright within the European Union was from another part of the pop world entirely...

However he is right in this instance to lay blame on the lawyers and accountants who will cream off most of the financial benefits, although there are – as is usual in these cases – enough problem areas to mean that not all copyright lawyers are satanic figures. I remember reading about the number of unauthorized "Snoopy" figures which make money for people other than Charles Schulz, and the reference to the Beatles might be due to the fact that their marketing rights were signed away for very small sums

indeed compared to the fortunes that were made for other people. But these have very little to do with printed books and stories, which is our particular cause for concern, and Patrick is right to be worried about the harmonization of copyright, particularly as those voices which usually rant about totalitarian European Union directives about the shape of carrots or the ingredients of ice cream have been conspicuously silent on this one.

The rationale, as I have seen it, for the term of copyright extending after a period of the author's death is usually justified by supposing a hypothetical writer who dies at the age of 25 leaving a wife and three small children just before his book becomes a bestseller. Clearly, in such cases, the interests of the author's dependents need to be protected. But there is a moot point whether these interests should extend into a second or third adult generation. As for how far the contents of the book are protected: well, we have at the moment the concept of the "authorized" or "unauthorized" biography in which the life-story of an individual may be written about by anyone who wishes to undertake it, subject only to the libel laws and the fact that a biographer who does not have the cooperation of the subject will have to balance the special insight cooperation gives against the freedom to cover areas which the subject might not wish to see exposed. It has been suggested, not altogether frivolously, I'm afraid, that the biography of a person consists of a kind of story in which that person holds copyright, but so far it remains possible (subject to the libel laws, as I've said, which is another can of worms) for biographies to be written. Sequels, I might argue, should be treated similarly.

Of course, many authors plan their

Sweet, \$12.99. (Fantasy novel, first edition; J. V. Jones [Julie Victoria Jones, not to be confused with Jenny Jones] is a new British writer, born 1963, now living in California; this American publication has been sent to us by Little Brown/Orbit, who are planning a UK paperback-original edition in April 1996, priced at £5.99.) *Late entry: 1995 publication, received in January 1996.*

Kellow-Harris, David Paul. **Spirit Rescue.** Minerva Press [1 Cromwell Place, London SW7 2JE – yes, the address differs slightly from that given in the Hudson title, above], ISBN 1-85863-541-1, 285pp, small-press paperback, £7.99. (Horror novel, first edition [copyrighted "1995"]; we're told nothing about the author, but this is probably a debut book by a new British writer.) *No date shown: received in January 1996.*

Laymon, Richard. **Body Rides.** Headline, ISBN 0-7472-1511-1, 377pp, hardcover, cover by Steve Crisp, £16.99. (Horror novel, first edition [?].) *22nd February 1996.*

Laymon, Richard. **Island.** Headline, ISBN 0-7472-5099-5, 504pp, A-format paperback, cover by Steve Crisp, £5.99. (Horror novel, first published in 1995.) *1st February 1996.*

Lee, Tanith. **Reigning Cats and Dogs.** Headline, ISBN 0-7472-5008-1, 304pp, A-format paperback, cover by Mark Salwowski, £5.99. (Fantasy novel, first published in 1995; reviewed by Chris Gilmore in *Interzone* 102.) *22nd February 1996.*

Le Guin, Ursula K. **Four Ways to Forgiveness.** Gollancz, ISBN 0-575-06301-7, 229pp, hardcover, £15.99. (Sf collection, first published in the USA, 1995; proof copy received; it contains four linked novellas, all set in the "Hainish universe" of Le Guin's earliest published fiction.) *9th May 1996.*

Little, Bentley. **Dark Dominion.** Headline, ISBN 0-

7472-4196-1, 505pp, A-format paperback, cover by Simon Dewey, £5.99. (Horror novel, first published in the USA [?], 1995.) *22nd February 1996.*

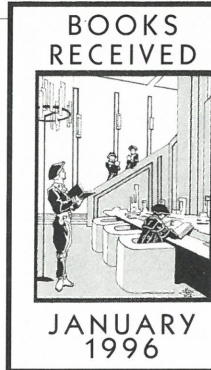
McDowell, Michael. **The Amulet.** HarperCollins, ISBN 0-00-616269-X, 316pp, A-format paperback, £4.99. (Horror novel, first published in the USA, 1979; this was the author's first novel: he has written a good deal since, though not much of it seems to have been published in Britain.) *22nd January 1996.*

McHugh, Maureen F. **Half the Day is Night.** Orbit, ISBN 1-85723-362-X, 352pp, B-format paperback, £6.99. (Sf novel, first published in the USA, 1994; reviewed by Paul McAuley in *Interzone* 91.) *1st February 1996.*

Monahan, Brent. **The Blood of the Covenant: A Novel of the Vampiric.** Hodder & Stoughton, ISBN 0-340-66081-3, 311pp, hardcover, cover by Chris Moore, £16.99. (Horror novel, first published in the USA, 1995; we've not heard of this writer before, but apparently he has produced several novels, including such titles as *Satan's Serenade* and *The Book of Common Dread*; this new book is a sequel to the last-named.) *15th February 1996.*

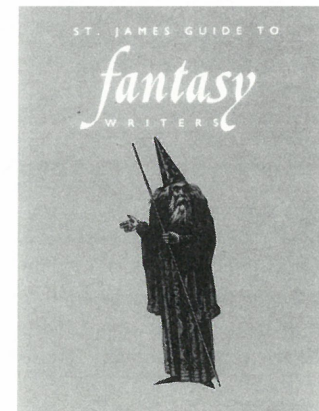
Nylund, Eric S. **Pawn's Dream.** Hodder & Stoughton, ISBN 0-340-66707-9, 345pp, hardcover, cover by Mick Van Houten, £16.99. (Fantasy novel, first published in the USA, 1995; this is probably a debut novel by a new American writer.) *15th February 1996.*

Palmer, Stephen. **Memory Seed.** Orbit, ISBN 1-85723-376-X, 405pp, A-format paperback, £5.99. (Sf novel, first edition; proof copy received; a debut novel by a new British writer, born 1962.) *4th April 1996.*



Preston, Lincoln. **Relic.** "Alien meets *Jurassic Park* in New York City." Bantam, ISBN 0-553-40940-9, 442pp, A-format paperback, £5.99. (Sf/horror novel, first published in the USA, 1995; a

thriller about a monster on the loose in a big-city museum, it has been optioned as a movie by Kennedy-Marshall Productions; "Lincoln Preston" is a pseudonym for Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child.) *8th February 1996.*



Pringle, David, ed. **St James Guide to Fantasy Writers.** Contributing editors Mike Ashley and Brian Stableford. St James Press [835 Penobscot Building, Detroit, MI 48226-4094, USA], ISBN 1-558-62205-5, xvi+711pp, hardcover, \$95. (Alphabetically arranged bibliographical and critical guide to some 420 fantasy authors; first edition; this was the labour of approximately three years, and contains essays by about 50 contributors, including K. V. Bailey, Mary Corran, Ian Covell, Shira Daemon, Don D'Amassa, Chris Gilmore, Paul Di Filippo, John Grant, Robert Irwin, Edward James, David Langford, Paul McAuley, Kim Newman, Stan Nicholls, Andy Sawyer, Darrell Schweitzer, Lisa Tuttle and Gary Westfahl – plus the sterling husband-and-wife teams of Chris & Pauline Morgan and Paul Kincaid & Maureen Speller.) *January 1996.*

Rawn, Melanie. **The Ruins of Ambrai: Exiles, Book One.** Macmillan, ISBN 0-333-65033-6, 678pp, hardcover, cover by Michael Whelan, £16.99. (Fantasy novel, first published in the USA, 1994; we listed an unbound proof copy of this a couple of issues ago and commented, "yes, it's 922 pages long"; well, that was the proof: the finished copy is over 200 pages shorter, presumably due to re-setting in smaller type.) *23rd February 1996.*

Roberts, Nora [Robb, J. D.]. **Naked in Death.** "An Eve Dallas Investigation." Hodder & Stoughton, ISBN 0-340-66689-7, 306pp, hardcover, cover by Bob Warner, £16.99. (Sf/crime novel, first published in the USA as by "J. D. Robb," 1995; the first in a series, it concerns a 22nd-century New York murder case; the publishers seem to have boobed: according to the cover and spine the by-line is supposed to be J. D. Robb, a pseudonym, but it says Nora Roberts on the title page – and according to cataloguing rules, the title page is what counts; Roberts is a prolific crime and romantic writer ["over 80 novels"], but this may be her first venture into sf.) *15th February 1996.*

Silva, David B. **The Disappeared.** Headline, ISBN 0-7472-4794-3, 439pp, A-format paperback, cover by Bob Corley, £5.99. (Horror novel, first published in the USA, 1995.) *1st February 1996.*

Simpson, George Gaylord. **The Dechronization of Sam Magruder.** Introduction by Arthur C. Clarke. Afterword by Stephen Jay Gould. St Martin's Press, ISBN 0-312-13963-2, xix+134pp, hardcover, \$18.95. (Sf novella, first edition; proof copy received; Simpson, a distinguished paleontologist who died in 1984, left this tale among his unpublished papers: it concerns time-travel to the age of the dinosaurs, and its interest resides in the fact that it was